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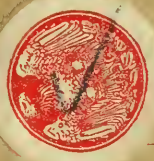

TION OF THE ENGLISH COLONIAL SETTLEMENTS
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THE CIVILIZED WORLD.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE

VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

AT RICHMOND, DECEMBER 15, 1859.

BY GEORGE F. HOLMES,

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

RICHMOND:
CHAS. H. WYNNE, PRINTER, 94 MAIN STREET.
1860.

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ADDRESS.

Mr. President,

and Gentlemen of the Virginia Historical Society:

Without impropriety I may congratulate you on the re-union of this evening. It must be gratifying to every liberal mind to witness and assist in each successive repetition of these annual celebrations, in which so much of the aspiring talent, of the matured intelligence, of the active energy, and of the acknowledged culture of the Ancient Dominion of Virginia, is brought together by the attraction derived from the common memories of the past, and is melted into harmony by the animation springing from the common hopes of the future. You meet for the purpose of retrieving or reviving the dim and obliterated traditions of the earlier day; of commemorating the achievements in Council and in battle-field,—in public service and in private enterprise, by which, in the short space of two centuries and a half, the little company, which attended Newport, and Gosnold, and Smith to the shores of the Chesapeake, has expanded into the great, the intelligent, the wealthy, and the well-peopled State of Virginia; and has been multiplied by continual accretions from without, and by vigorous internal development, into a vast and powerful confederation of free, sovereign and independent States, spreading across the wide continent from ocean to ocean, and from the reign of Northern frost to the realm of tropical heat and luxuriance.

Of this great arch, Virginia is the key-stone: and your

Historical Society, in its annual assemblages, resuscitates all the ideas, and sentiments, and reminiscences, which are implicated and embodied in the life and destiny of the United States.

Thus, the design of your meeting—the objects of your Society—the constituents of your eminent body—the feelings and the reflections which accompany you here—the diversity of the regions from which so many representatives of the widely diffused Virginian name have converged to this point, and for this occasion;—the remembrance of the distinguished gentlemen, who have illustrated previous celebrations by their instructive or brilliant addresses; and, in an especial manner, the recollection that, in addressing myself to you, Mr. President, I necessarily recall to the minds of all who hear me the eminent and successful labors by which you have adorned your retirement, and have added the graces of literature, and the prizes of history and biography, to the eminent renown previously won, by services rendered to your State and to your whole country, at home and abroad;—all these various influences operate in concert to add interest to these recurring assemblages, and to provoke a spontaneous expression of reverential admiration for the lofty and generous aims implied in these honorable anniversaries.

But, gentlemen, if I may appropriately felicitate you on these auspicious and suggestive associations, I must the more particularly, on this account, return my cordial thanks to you, and especially to the Members of your Executive Committee, for the honor of my appointment to deliver the customary address this evening.

Your liberality and confidence are exemplified, but my embarrassment is augmented, by the consideration that I have been invited, notwithstanding my English origin, to address a Virginia audience, and the Virginia Historical Society, on topics necessarily connected with the History of Virginia. You will

pardon the affection which I still entertain for the home of my childhood, remembering that, in many instances, your own lineage is drawn from the same abundant fountain of modern freedom;—and recollecting that the Old Dominion of Virginia was the first scion transferred from that venerable stock to the rich, prolific and virgin soil of the New World. The tenacity of our adherence to early loves, and friendships, and obligations, and to the friends of our fathers before us, is the surest pledge of the stability and sincerity of our maturer attachments.

You would not ask me, then, to dwell upon the praises even of Virginia, when her splendor shines by the eclipse of the more ancient glories of the Mother-land. There are passages in English History, and in the narrative of England's connection with her Colonies, which her patriotic children, at home and abroad, and the descendants of her children to the latest generation, can regard only with fruitless regret, and mortifying condemnation. These faults demand consideration, but they may be more fitly exposed by others. Rather permit me to select, from the copious array of topics before me, one which may do honor to Virginia, as the eldest born of the American sisterhood, without diminishing the fair fame of England, or obscuring the services which, intentionally or instructively, by deliberate policy, or by inevitable development of inherent tendencies in herself, and in her offspring, she has rendered to human liberty and progress. With this aim, I shall attempt to combine the glories of England and of Virginia in one view, and I may succeed in enlarging the appreciation of both by the union.

It is a prevalent habit with the American people to contemplate American History—American Society—American Institutions—the past career, the present condition, and the future destinies of the separate and of the aggregate States—in 'too insular' a manner, as if they were entirely estranged

from the general order of human affairs. The Roman Poet of the Augustan Age spoke of the contemporaneous inhabitants of the British Isles as a race dissevered from the whole world—*toto divisos orbe Britannos*. We, on this side of the Atlantic, have appropriated to ourselves in our habitual speech, the sneer at our barbarous ancestors, uttered by their conquerors nearly twenty centuries ago. It is a narrow and mistaken policy, though explained and excused by the hostile or jealous relations in which this country has been placed during critical times with regard to Great Britain and the political systems of Continental Europe. But, by thus contracting the field of view, we deliberately exclude the abundant illumination which would otherwise stream in from antecedent times, and from the surrounding world. Moreover, we are thus constrained to disregard the innumerable cords which unite into one grand harmony 'the Federation of the Nations;' and to ignore the continual play of those currents of action and re-action which bind together the complicated phenomena of social change, producing that august but unstable equilibrium in the life of the world, which, like the great Ocean, exhibits incessant movement and alternation, without ever transcending the bounds that maintain its essential unity and identity. By contemplating the phases of American existence, as if it were sustained and animated by forces distinct from the general impulses of humanity, we are precluded from the full comprehension even of those events which seem to appertain peculiarly and exclusively to this side of the Atlantic. The mission of the United States will be better understood, and more worthily appreciated, if regarded as constituting a main link in the chain of human evolution—as presenting one of the latest and grandest acts of the portentous tragedy of man's action in the world—than if it be treated as an anomaly—as an episode—or as a brilliant and

meteoric digression from the regular destinies of the human race.

The time, too, seems to urge upon us a recourse to these broader views. The bright morning of American greatness is shrouded with ominous gloom. The extended Union, which has been the pride, the glory, the security and the power of the American people is threatened with violent disruption. A world-wide fanaticism, of no limited or transient origin—the creature of political ignorance, of religious bigotry, of sectional jealousy and of the frenzy of innovation—has at length broken out into acts of treasonable discord and fraternal bloodshed, after having long fostered local and party animosities. The air is darkened around us with spectral shapes of terror. Before the storm bursts in its full fury, if burst it must—before the ruin is achieved, if the mighty fabric must be shattered;—it is wise to inquire by what visible and invisible agencies the vast structure had been reared and cemented, and to learn what were its relations to the general economy of the nations in its origin, its growth, and its maturity;—what were the harmonics prevailing between its vibrations and the movements of the rest of mankind. It would be well to recognize that secret of fate—that *arcanum imperii*—which has impelled and cherished the progress of our country, but which, like the water of crystallization, may be beyond the reach of scientific analysis, until the brilliant gem which enclosed it has been crushed into fragments. It is also incumbent upon us at this time to ascertain the extent to which the liberties, the prosperity, and the independence of the separate States are implicated with their combination;—and how far in their prosperity and persistent connection are involved the maintenance of freedom in the world, the expansion of civilization, and the diffusion of morals, intelligence and religion. Thus may be discovered the immense and increasing services which the American polity was calculated to render, and the ultimate

tendencies of that brightening and broadening career which lay invitingly before its path.

To minister to the formation of such ampler views, and, as far as may be, to mingle instruction and gratification with the occupations of the hour, I have ventured to approach a subject too vast for my information, my abilities, my opportunities, and my time. I invite you, then, to accompany me with your indulgent favor while I discuss rapidly, and therefore, if on no other account, imperfectly, the Virginia Colony, or the relations of English Colonization in America to the contemporaneous and antecedent History of the Civilized World.

It would scarcely have happened by the mere caprice of fortune that most of the eminent names of the Elizabethan era, still surviving during the first years of the reign of James, should have been united in the Patents by which the germ of the English Colonies in America was planted and preserved at Jamestown. Still less could it have been an accident that Lord Bacon, besides being a member of the Corporation and of the Council of the London Company, should have impressed his views and policy upon the organization of the infant settlement; and should have written his Essay on Plantations almost as a commentary upon the early fortunes of Virginia. Nor will it satisfy an intelligent curiosity to ascribe to chance the remarkable convergence to the shores of North America, about that time, of the brilliant hopes and adventurous emprise of the brightest and most chivalrous spirits of the chivalric court of Elizabeth. There must have been some potent and pervasive enchantment springing from the united, though impalpable, agencies of the miraculous past, and of the teeming present, to concentrate, coincidently or successively, in one common purpose of hazard, difficulty and expense, so many shining spirits and martial heroes, and sagacious or astute statesmen, as Sir Philip Sydney, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Sir Walter Raleigh,

Sir Richard Grenville, Sir Francis Bacon, and his intriguing cousin, the Earl of Salisbury, Capt. John Smith, Sir Thomas Smith, Percy, and Lord Delaware. An explanation is required for this sudden convocation of gallant soldiers, and grave councillors, and learned lawyers, and profound sages, and prudent financiers, and calculating merchants, and cautious capitalists, by the cradle of the nascent and infant Virginia. No other community has ever been illustrated at its birth by such a galaxy of resplendent names. Never did dreaming astrologer venture to cast such a horoscope of conjunctive and auspicious stars for the nativity of potentate or empire. Never did Royal Highness or Imperial Prince receive the honor of such an array of noble and distinguished sponsors. Not only did civil prudence, and military renown, and reviving philosophy, and commercial adventure, send notable representatives, but Literature, with all the returning Arts and Sciences, participated in the ceremonial of the earliest English colonization; and the Maiden Queen herself hailed its budding promise by imposing upon it the name which her fancy had chosen to be her own. The Poet, Sandys, whose brother had been the pupil of the venerable and judicious Hooker; Coke, the greatest of Black-letter lawyers, and the rudest, but one of the sturdiest champions of English Liberty; Harriott, the mathematician, and anticipator of Des Cartes; Hakluyt, the faithful conservator of commercial explorations and geographical discoveries; Drake, the herald, and, in great measure, the founder of Britain's "Empire of the Seas;" these, and many others, of scarcely inferior repute in their day and generation, shared in the various efforts to establish an English Colony near the waters of the Chesapeake. They seemed to promise, by their arrival on the soil of Virginia, or by their connection with its settlement, that the various culture of England, her freedom, her society, and her policy, should be transferred to a new land, and cherished

into more vigorous and unrestrained development by the more favoring clime, the more fertile soil, and the wider domain of the late-won Hesperides:

> Certus enim promisit Apollo
> Antiquam tellure nova Salamina futuram.

The immediate results of this amazing conjunction of talents and energies were trivial indeed. But, in the weakness or failure of the first efforts, bright auguries and brilliant memories were left behind, which revealed the extent and the intensity of the hidden impulses that had simultaneously directed the anxious hopes of the multitude to the land of promise beyond the setting sun.

So far was the settlement of Virginia, or the concurrence of so much hardihood and genius in its settlement, from being accidental, that they may be most manifestly proved to have been "the long result of time," and the natural maturity of all the previous tendencies of European progress. "Time, with his retinue of ages," hovered over the Capes of the Chesapeake, asking in those years the heritage of the goodly land for his English progeny. The subsequent battles, contentions, and revolutions of Europe, evince that the fulcrum on which plays the lever of the world thenceforward moved by a gradual procession along the habitual line of Empire to the Western Continent. The fortunes and the destinies of the great monarchies were from that day bound up, more and more intimately, with the progress of the American Colonies. Even the retardations and the obstructions to colonization—the frustration of Raleigh's sagacious enterprises, and their final abandonment by him—the unavenged sacrifice of White's colony at Roanoke—were indissolubly connected with great national transactions, with the long maritime warfare, unheralded and unsparing, between England and Spain—between freedom in politics, and religion, and action, and

thought, and despotism in all—and with the arrogant menace and ruinous overthrow of Philip's "Invincible Armada."

No permanent foothold in America was secured by the English until the 10th day of June, 1610. The discoveries of John and Sebastian Cabot in the reign of Henry VII.—the explorations of the Dominus Vobiscum, the Trinity, and the Union, in the reign of Henry VIII.—the arctic voyages of Frobisher under Elizabeth—had only increased geographical knowledge, encouraged the English fisheries at Newfoundland, and displayed the inclination of England to disregard the Papal partition of the undiscovered lands of the Ocean between the Crowns of Spain and Portugal. The intelligence and heroism of Gilbert—the large sagacity, the untiring energy, and the lavish expenditures of Raleigh—the chivalry of Grenville—the gallantry and wisdom of Smith—had published the virtues of these several commanders, and proved how arduous is the task of sowing and cultivating the seeds of society. But all their labors, and daring, and outlays had failed to secure the establishment of the Colony for which the enthusiasm of themselves and their countrymen had been so deeply excited. There had been changes, and enlargements, and assignments, and forfeitures of Patents. Charters had been modified, and expanded, and divided. Large companies of wealthy, powerful, and illustrious men had combined to achieve a task too onerous for the matchless energy and abilities of Raleigh. Yet, after all these changes and renewed efforts, the English tenure of Virginia continued to be transitory or precarious.

The uninterrupted and determined occupation of the American soil dates only from Sunday, the 10th of June, 1610. On that day was commenced, with solemn, but resolute feelings, the restoration of the solitary hamlet possessed by the English in America, which had been abandoned with indignant despair three days before, after a troubled occupation of three tedious and eventful years.

Gaunt with famine; reduced in numbers by desertion, disease, and death; worn down with the long agony of hope deferred and hopes disappointed, having experienced new disasters with almost every fresh effort; oppressed even by the recent tardy and tempest-tost addition to their famishing community, overwhelmed with despondency, and sick of their hard exile,—the colonists resolved to cease their fruitless exertions, and to renounce all that the unimagined destinies reserved for their enterprise and their race. They fled from the scene of their trials and their afflictions, trusting themselves in crazy and rotten vessels to the mercy of those waves from which most of them had so lately escaped. They tempted the Ocean once more, with provisions barely sufficient for a brief voyage, but with the dreary and fainting expectation of obtaining the requisite supplies for their homeward journey from the fishing vessels which frequented the banks of Newfoundland.

Such was the prospective issue of the Colony at Jamestown! Such the result of the "The Starving Time in Virginia!" The calamitous experience of the Spanish, Portuguese, and French settlements, and of the failures of Sir Walter Raleigh at Roanoke, was renewed. This abandonment of Jamestown probably suggested to Lord Bacon the impressive remark: "It is the sinfullest thing in the world to forsake or destitute a plantation once in forwardness; for, besides the dishonour, it is the guiltiness of blood of many commendable persons."

In the previous year, Capt. John Smith had been compelled by a frightful accident to return to England for medical advice. Nearly five hundred persons received his farewell. Only sixty remained when Newport, and Gates, and Somers arrived from the Bermudas with one hundred and fifty recruits. These three chiefs, preceding Lord Delaware, the

Governor appointed under the last Charter, had been wrecked in the same vessel, amid the

Breadths of tropic shade, and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise,

that adorn those Islands of Faërie, which received from one of these adventurers the name of the Somer Isles, and furnished to Shakspeare the original of "the still-vexed Bermoothes," peopled with the enchantments of Prospero, the love and innocence of Miranda, and the ideal graces of Ariel.

Nearly a year after their departure from England, the shipwrecked mariners arrived, with their commanders, at Jamestown, in two frail vessels of their own construction. Their numbers threatened only to increase the distress which their scanty stores could not long alleviate. All agreed to forsake the hapless country, as Lane's Colony had deserted Roanoke on the arrival of Drake, a quarter of a century before. Heavy, indeed, must have been the hearts of the settlers during the painful months preceding and necessitating this determination. These may have been occasioned or aggravated by improvidence, insubordination and vicious conduct; but the misery was not the less real, and the crisis of fate was not the less portentous, because they had provoked their own wretchedness.

A few hungry and half-clothed men, the relics of a large emigration; in the midst of the wilderness; surrounded by the forest and its savage occupants; without coherence among themselves; without the solace of woman's presence, or the charm of childish pranks and prattle; cut off from their country and their countrymen; removed by hundreds of desert miles from the nearest European settlers, in whom they would have recognized only enemies; with the wild waste of waters between them and their native land; with the unexplored immensity of 'the gloomy horror of the woods' towards the setting sun; without longer dream of

advantage to themselves—without amusement—without acceptable occupation for either mind or hand—without social order—without security—without hope of relief—without prospect of happiness or even tolerable misery—without adequate sustenance, or any imaginable encouragement—without health, or strength, or anticipation of continued life; they might well repudiate the interests of their native land, not yet comprehended by her sages; the demands of their creed, still associated with intolerant hostilities; and ignore everything else in the consciousness of their overpowering calamities.

The seed of Empire had been sown on the soil of Virginia by English enterprise, and English hands. It had put forth some struggling roots, but the plant had withered by neglect, mismanagement, misconduct and misfortune. The work of heroes and of sages was apparently destroyed. The hopes of England, and the promise of American liberty were once more afloat, returning on the current of the Powhatan, unfulfilled, and to prevent or delay future fulfillment. It was the critical hour of modern destinies. But the will of Providence was more propitious than the deliberations of men. The fugitives were arrested near the mouth of the river by Lord Delaware, who had at length arrived with re-inforcements and abundant supplies. They returned to their recently abandoned home; and, on the morrow, the 10th of June, they resumed, with prayer and thanksgiving, and earnest augury, the solemn task of laying the small foundations of a mighty Empire.

"It is," said they, "the arm of the Lord of Hosts, who would have his people pass the Red Sea and the wilderness, and then possess the land of Canaan."

"Doubt not," they proclaimed to the people of England, "God will raise our State, and build his Church in this excellent clime."

Could any thaumaturgic art have enabled Lord Delaware, or his fellow-workers, to look

> into the Future, far as human eye could see;

and have presented to him, or to them,

> The Vision of the World, and all the Wonder that should be;

what energy, what enthusiasm, what exultation, what sublime resolution, and what lofty endeavor, would have been inspired by the magnificent revelation! The prescience, so accorded, might have extended beyond the clouds which now darken our horizon, and have reached to the contemplation of a vaster and still more prosperous confederation than has yet been imagined, beneath skies once more serene. The Royal Procession of Banquo's unborn heirs, closed by the then reigning monarch, James I. with the two-fold balls, and treble sceptre, borne by him as King of England, Scotland and Ireland, could not have afforded a more dazzling anticipation of future glory, than would have been seen issuing from the settlement of the first English Colony in America, under the auspices of the same King. Nor would the vision of Roman triumphs and the Imperial dominion of Rome, unveiled to the gaze of Æneas in the Elysian Fields, have revealed a scene of brighter promise for the human family, than would have been displayed in the boundless perspective, had any magic ointment unsealed the eyes of Lord Delaware, or any fond Anchises, or guiding Sibyl, pointed to Virginia, and her direct or collateral posterity, saying,

> hanc adspice gentem
> Romanosque tuos.

It was only the inauguration of the grand phantasmagoria which was unrolled before the admiring view of Lord

Bathurst, and immortalized by the oratory of Burke, which it inspired.

If such provision was denied to the actors and contemporaries of that significant, though obscure ceremonial, the restoration of Jamestown, we may transport ourselves in imagination to the scene, with all the knowledge that the achievements of generations have furnished, with all the illustration from anterior events that the more diligent and comprehensive study of history has supplied. That point of time and of space when despair was transmitted into persistent and successful endeavor, when English colonization was first assured, affords an appropriate "specular mount," from which to discern the agencies in the foretime, which received form, expression, and realization by that act and its consequences; and to detect its results in the ensuing generations, in the Continent on which it was enacted, and the Continent whence the impulse and the actors were derived.

The occasion may be deemed too slight to be made the symbol of such wide disturbance. The commencements of great political mutations are almost invariably trivial in appearance, often even contemptible. "The cloud as of the bigness of a man's hand" may be the herald of tempests which will involve the Heavens in universal tumult, and desolate extensive kingdoms. Consider the grain of mustard seed. It is not the magnitude of the occurrence, but the amount of antecedent preparation which it implies, and the character or range of its effects, which constitutes the importance of any historical transaction. The Virginia Colony was the summation of anterior tendencies, the germination of a new system—of a new process of the ages, and as such cannot be overrated.

In the tombs of the pristine inhabitants of the American Continent, a race extinct before this New World was discovered by Columbus, relics have been found suggesting the

presence of the arts and knowledge, the culture and the creeds, of all the more notable populations of antiquity. Chinese and Hindoos, Egyptians and Phœnicians, Jews and Etruscans, Greeks and Celts, Thibetans, Tartars, and other Mongolian races, are represented by the buried remains scattered over the land from the mediterranean seas of the North to the broad waters of the La Plata in the South. These strange, and scarcely appreciated evidences of the almost incomprehensible connection of the primitive occupants of America with the various peoples of the elder world, present an anticipation and prototype of what may be observed in her more recent history. All the civilized nations of the modern world have contributed, in diverse modes, their blood, their enterprise, their treasure, their learning, their experience, their invention, their manners, and their civility, to be fused into a new and all-embracing harmony beneath the Western skies. They have thus produced a universal amalgam, which, if the concoction proceed to perfection, may be, like the celebrated Corinthian brass, more precious than the aggregate of its constituent elements. All the currents of previous, and especially of modern progress, ran together in the Virginia Colony, and flowed onward to her younger sister: and Jamestown, at the moment of its renovation, marks the point, in space and time, where the grand conflux of the waters took place.

Isolated and anomalous as the phenomena of our political and social organization appear in the popular conception of them, no part of the continuous process of historical development is more rigidly and minutely the result of the silent laws of human progress, or more certainly the product of numerous antecedent catenations of inter-dependent causes. Even the discovery of America, at the time of its occurrence, was no fortuitous, or unprepared event. In the days when

the successful daring of Columbus broke like a revelation over Europe, his magnificent conquest from the unknown was a natural birth of the time, as his bold emprise and previous bold conviction were the offspring of preceding circumstances and conjectures, as well as of his own assiduous investigations and patient inductions.

The whole life of Columbus, his studies, his aspirations, his early career, his perseverance and pertinacity, exhibited the operation of the pervading influences of the Fifteenth Century upon a mind of singular genius and resolution. He lived in an age of amazing maritime adventure and intense commercial expectation. To recognize how largely his enterprise was due to prevalent tendencies, it is sufficient to peruse the remarkable exposition by the son of the motives which induced the father to attempt his hazardous exploration of the unmeasured Ocean. In that memorable statement nothing is more remarkable than the letter of the Florentine astronomer, Paul Toscanelli, which is declared to have been one of the main causes of the undertaking. This epistle was a repetition of a previous communication addressed by the same scientific Italian to Fernandez Martinez, of Lisbon, who was then engaged in similar inquiries. In this letter occur the geographical misapprehensions and miscalculations which deceived the contemporaries of Columbus and himself, but which constituted, in consequence of that deception, important elements of his success. Here, too, are the customary allusions to the distant explorations of Marco Polo, and of other travellers, who, during or after the Crusades, and actuated by impulses derived from them, had penetrated into the remote and hitherto unknown regions of Eastern Asia. This letter was written at Florence, on the 25th of June, 1474, eighteen years before Columbus sailed from the port of Palos to explore the bounds of the undefined Atlantic.

In a second letter, indeed, the date of which I have not been able to determine, Toscanelli writes to his illustrious correspondent:

"I am delighted that you have fully comprehended my demonstration, and that this voyage is no longer a mere possibility, but is henceforward certain and real; for its accomplishment would be an incalculable benefit, and an immense glory in the estimation of all Christendom."

Amongst other motives by which Columbus was stimulated in his great undertaking, according to the same indisputable authority, reference is made to the prophecy of Seneca, to the conjectures of Aristotle, or the Pseudo-Aristotle, to Ptolemy, Strabo, Pliny, Marinus, Averroës, Alfergani, Marco Polo, Sir John Mandeville, Peter d'Ailly, and others who had visited strange regions, or had speculated on the shape of the earth, and on the distribution of its lands and waters.

All the nascent science, all the accumulated learning, the recent and the earlier observation and experience of Europe, in an age of peculiar intellectual energy, and of singular activity by sea and land, concentrated their illumination upon this point. The transcendant merit of Columbus consisted in his susceptibility to the spirit and tendencies of the period; in his collection, collation and appreciation of the abundant and luminous evidence; in his firm conviction, and in the unequalled sagacity and resolution which dared to act upon that conviction in the face of sneers, indifference, neglect, of unfathomable doubts and inconceivable dangers. The great man is not he who places himself at variance with the spirit of his age, but he who most thoroughly and intelligently accepts it, and is thereby enabled to render himself its most complete, and consequently its most potent and most novel realization.

In a more elaborate and detailed review of the concatenation of the great movements which attained their ultimate

accomplishment in the English settlements in America, it would be interesting to show how the enthusiastic pursuit of maritime discovery by the Portuguese, and the heroic, but sanguinary daring of the Spanish Conquerors, gradually sprung out of the Crusades;—and how, from the Crusades, concurrently with other causes which they encouraged or modified, arose also the commercial changes, the commercial necessities, and the commercial aspirations, which inflamed the minds of men in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries, and produced the notable achievements of modern industry, literature, science, philosophy and civilization. The grand events of human history form parts of a single chain, though the separate links sometimes seem so trivial that their importance is overlooked till the whole series is regarded in its continuity. The midnight aspect of the starry heavens presents to the uninstructed gaze only dazzling perplexity and inextricable confusion. In the shining hieroglyphics traced by those countless orbs, the purged eye of science discerns the rule of eternal law, and order, immutable, though inexplicable, throughout the fathomless abysses of the sky. The moral processes of humanity are even more intricate and mysterious, but they, too, are obsequious to the same providential governance, which conjoins them into one harmonious, but incomprehensible scheme. What the poet declared in regard to the plastic powers and processes which mould the individual man, is equally applicable to the genesis and evolution of historical change:

> Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows
> Like harmony in music; there is a dark
> Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
> Discordant elements, makes them cling together
> In one society.

The New World won from the Ocean—the late realization of Plato's dream of Atlantis, and of the dim tradition of

Antilia—was to become the heritage of the nations. It was first to be the prize of their rivalries and contentions. The elements of European culture were to be developed here, free from the antiquated restrictions transmitted from the past. The populations of Europe able to participate in the prospective fusion were to be introduced into America, and to display their capacity or incompetency to achieve the task prescribed by destiny. Spain, and Portugal, and France made trial of their skill: but the experiment failed in their hands. The winner of the race, the child of the world's promise and of the world's hopes, was almost the last of the competitors to enter upon the course. It was an accident, however, which perhaps prevented the discovery of the New Continent under the auspices of England.

The capture of Bartholomew Columbus by pirates, on his mission to offer his brother's services to the English monarch; the opportune conquest of the Moorish kingdom of Grenada, and the sagacity, ambition, piety, or cupidity of Queen Isabella, secured for Spain the honor of adding another Continent to the habitable earth. But it is still necessary to explain the long retardation of English adventure in the Western Hemisphere, which is rendered stranger by the fact that the main land of North America was actually visited by Cabot, sailing under the flag of Henry VII. before it had been seen by Columbus. This explanation will reveal much of the recondite significance and opportunity of the Virginia Colony, and will introduce us into the heart of the tangled policy, the great antagonistic tendencies, and the social perturbations, out of which arose the English settlements in America.

On the application of Don Henry of Portugal, Eugenius IV., by a papal bull conceded to that crown, 'an exclusive right to all countries which the Portugese should discover from Cape Non to the Continent of India.' In consequence of the discoveries of Columbus, this grant was modified by the

infamous Alexander VI. and the whole of the unknown world, to the east and to the west of an imaginary line, was divided unintelligently between Spain and Portugal. Both concessions were united in the Spanish Crown, when the Duke of Alva, the executioner of the Netherlands, subjugated Portugal; and when Philip II. added, in 1580, the crowns of Portugal and both the Indies to the almost universal empire of Charles V. The date is important; for Queen Elizabeth's patent to Sir Humphrey Gilbert was issued only two years before, and the patent to Sir Walter Raleigh only four years after this vast monopoly of the regions of colonial enterprise had been effectuated.

France, indeed, while waging war on the Flemish frontier and in Italy, had disregarded the pontificial donations in the same spirit in which she had sought and received the alliance of the Turks. England had also timidly manifested a disposition on some occasions to secure a foothold in the New World. But the obligatory force of the prohibition to all strangers to interfere with the inheritance of the Spanish and Portuguese sovereigns, was operative in England, and was effectually asserted in the reign of Edward IV. with regard to the trade of the Guinea Coast. This proscription continued to operate until the throne of Elizabeth was indissolubly connected with the political success of the Reformation, and a war between England and Spain had become a prospective certainty. Thus the chief event of modern centuries, the dislocation of temporal and ecclesiastical authority, and the change of political systems and religious creeds by the Reformation of Luther, was an important and even necessary preliminary to the establishment of an English Colony in Virginia. The nativity of our ancient metropolis was heralded and prepared by memorable events: and the mighty omens which preceded its foundation were fair auguries of the vast consequences to humanity, in the near or the distant future, to be anticipated

from the first English settlement—the first offshoot of English freedom in America.

The papal prohibition might have failed to produce such unaccustomed abstinence on the part of the English during the century of Portuguese and Spanish discovery, and the following century of Portuguese, Spanish and French appropriation, if the political and social condition of England had not tended concurrently to the same result.

In the last year of the fourteenth century the throne of England was usurped by Henry IV., and the crown transferred to 'the aspiring blood of Lancaster.' Thus the century of maritime discovery was in England ushered in by the commencement of the long discord which desolated the land, destroyed its resources, despoiled its cities, and sacrificed its people. Rachel, weeping for her children, could not exchange her ravaged home for distant wanderings. War with Scotland—the persecution of the Lollards—the victory of Agincourt,—and the acquisition of the French Crown, occupied the first quarter of the century. But the premature death of Henry V.—the infancy and the idiocy of his ill-fated son—the rivalries and the intrigues of the Royal Dukes and other great nobles—precipitated the expulsion of the English from France under the patriotic impulse communicated by the heroic exaltation of Joan of Arc. The ruinous wars of the Roses ensued—the long contention between the houses of York and Lancaster—not terminated by the Battle of Bosworth, and scarcely concluded by the astute policy and cool tyranny of Henry VII. and the princes of the Tudor line. During such long continued agitations, industry and commerce, and maritime adventure, could not experience the genial gales which were speeding Portugal and Spain to their glorious discoveries in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans. In England, the energies of the people and their resources had been wasted, the political constitution had been widely

shaken, and the social fabric seemed to be shivered from the crown to the base. Society and government demanded reconstruction and the animation of a new spirit, before the period of English expansion and triumph could be inaugurated.

This process of renovation was fortunately reserved for the sixteenth century—the era of Spanish and Portuguese conquest, occupation and colonization—though it was only ineffectually and transitorily accomplished even then. The conquests of Cortez and Pizarro, and Albuquerque were achieved—the mines of Mexico and Peru, and 'the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind' had been won—the Araucana of Ercilla y Zuniga, and the Lusiad of Camoens had been written—before England dreamt of oceanic or trans-oceanic empire. The accession of the youthful, splendid, accomplished and ambitious monarch, Henry VIII., might have promised an early completion of the tendency to political and social reorganization, and to external development. But, instead of wisely prosecuting the silent offices of peace, he preferred to blaze among the illustrious sovereigns of that memorable time;—to outshine Francis of France on the Field of the Cloth of Gold; and to rival Francis, and Charles V., and Leo X., and Soleyman, the Magnificent, on the troubled arena of European politics. His futile intervention in the controversies of the Continent; his endeavor to balance the scales between Francis and Charles; his adoption and assertion of the Reformation on matrimonial grounds; his dissolution of the monasteries, and appropriation of their revenues for financial and political considerations; his fluctuating and capricious regulation of the creed of his subjects by fire, gibbet and prison; exacerbated the social agitation, and diverted his attention, and the enterprise of his people, from any effectual attempt to participate in the new treasures of the Eastern and Western worlds. The religious oscillations, with the attendant persecutions of the reigns of Edward VI.—the bloody Mary—and Elizabeth,

prolonged the retardation of England's commercial importance. It was further delayed by the solicitude with which Henry VII. coveted a Spanish alliance for his dubious line; by the marriage of Henry VIII. with the aunt of Charles V.; by the union of Philip II., the son of Charles, with Queen Mary, on whose death the Spanish potentate promptly tendered his hand to Queen Elizabeth, without experiencing an equally prompt repulse.

Thus the domestic relations of the Tudor family to the sovereigns of Spain,—the aspirations of the founders of the line for continental influence—and the internal condition of their country, social, political and religious,—all concurred in closing for more than a century the portals of America to English adventurers. But a wonderful change was gradually introduced by the stirring incidents and novel interests of the reign of Elizabeth. In heart, she remained of the old religion of her father, accepting the most controverted tenets of the rejected creed, but regarding her own ecclesiastical supremacy as the most important article of the true faith.

The throne of Elizabeth was insecure. It was not confirmed till the execution of the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada, thirty years after her accession. The legitimacy of Elizabeth had been solemnly denied by her tyrannical father. This denial had been corroborated by Act of Parliament—by the sign-manual of her half-brother, Edward VI.—and by the formal legitimatization of her elder half-sister, Queen Mary. This decision would, perhaps, be sustained by the strict rules of law and morals. Mary of Scotland was apparently the true lineal inheritor of the English Crown; and her claims, if they had been sustained by her native kingdom, would have been pressed by her ambitious kinsmen, the Guises, and might have been maintained by the arms of France, as they were asserted by the intrigues and the navies of Spain. Elizabeth was thus

compelled by her position to espouse the Protestant cause, to identify herself with the Protestant movement, and to become the champion of Protestantism against that communion, which repudiated her title to the throne, and in concert with one or other of the great Catholic powers, endeavored by intrigue, violence, and commination, to subvert her authority, to alienate her subjects, to provoke rebellion, to invite her assassination, or to crush her by open hostilities. Thus was she thrown upon her people for support, and nobly did they respond to her confidence. Thus was she obliged to conciliate their good will, and to cherish their resources, by the diligent cultivation of their national sentiments and institutions, of their energies, their capacities, their industry, and their commerce. All this she did with unwavering firmness and wonderful sagacity. Much of the success may have been due to the political intelligence of her prudent ministers, but the spirit, the equability, and the grandeur of her rule, may be safely ascribed to her own regal mind and capacious intellect. The necessities which imposed upon her the task of nursing at home the sources of present security and independence, urged her to seek, foster, and create new elements of power abroad. Hence, she encouraged the Protestant revolution throughout Europe—fanning the flame in Germany, and sending her troops and commanders to uphold it by arms in the distracted realm of Scotland, in the revolted provinces of the Netherlands, and amongst the Huguenots in the wars of the League in France. Hence, she appeared as the ally of John Knox and the Regent Murray; of William of Orange and his son, Maurice; of Condé, Coligny, and Henry of Navarre. Hence, too, she readily connived at, authorized, or participated in, the semi-piratical enterprises of her courtiers and captains against the marine and the possessions of the overwhelming despotism of Spain.

In these military and naval schools were formed the daring

and versatile adventurers, who humbled the pride of Philip, and crippled the power of the Spanish Crown—who carried the English flag into all seas, and introduced the seeds of English freedom and polity into Virginia.

In defending her throne, and asserting the independence of her kingdom, the truly national policy of Elizabeth extinguished forever the pretensions of the Austrian rulers of Spain to universal empire. The same measures which achieved this protection of the civil and religious liberties of Europe, simultaneously developed with amazing rapidity the intelligence, cultivation, and prosperity of the English. We can scarcely appreciate the immensity and the variety of the impulses then communicated to England, to free institutions and to civilization, without patiently contemplating the host of stars, of all degrees of brilliancy and of all magnitudes, which, in isolated and unapproached splendor, or clustered together in glittering constellations, illumined with their blended radiance the skies of the Elizabethan age. On the muster roll of the Immortals were inscribed, during that half century, English names, which still stir the blood like the sound of a clarion, echoing with ever-augmented reverberations over the earth, and marking the rise and fall of states; the revolutions of religion, polity, science, and philosophy; the bloom of literature; the conquests of commerce, and the triumphs of the land and of the sea. This roll of glory is too voluminous for present exhibition; but, long as it is, each separate name is the symbol of achievements, which alone merited the assiduous labors of an age.

The circumstances of the time co-operated with the deliberate efforts of Elizabeth. The destruction of the old feudal barons in the Wars of the Roses, (St. Alban's, and Towton, and Barnet, and Tewkesbury,) and by the more fatal exactions of Henry VII.—the perturbations of landed wealth consequent on the dissolution of the monasteries—and the

gradual abrogation of serfdom, by no act of legislature or monarch, but by the changes of private interest—these sweeping mutations had entirely revolutionized the constitution of society, and altered the character of all social arrangements. A new nobility had sprung up. An industrious middle class had arisen, and been aided in the rapid accumulation of wealth and influence by the long civil strife and commercial disturbances in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands. The occupations of the people were altered. Lands were enclosed for pasturage. Commerce and manufactures started into life. Towns were enlarged and built. The resources of the nation were multiplied, and capital was continually re-duplicated. But large bodies of the people were reduced by the sudden revulsion to pauperism and mendicancy. The ancient nobility and gentry, who had derived their social and political preponderance from their territorial possessions, found themselves outstripped in wealth and power by those who fattened on the rising riches of industry, speculation, and trade. The sentiment put by Shakespeare in the mouth of Hamlet, was familiar in that day to the experience and regrets of "the good old gentlemen of England;" and is commemorated in such contemporaneous ballads as "Time's Alteration, and "The Old and Young Courtier." "The age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe."

A rapid social fermentation was then in progress, changing the pursuits of men, and throwing whole classes of the English people out of the ancient routine of life and employment. These classes were peculiarly the laboring population, the idlers by profession, and the gentry and nobility of reduced or unsettled fortunes. Thus were simultaneously supplied and animated the hands to execute, and the intelligence to contrive and direct novel and arduous adventures. The difficulty and uncertainty of support at home actuated the rank

and file of these adventurers. The prospect of sudden gain and eminent renown inspired their leaders. Hence, when undeclared or proclaimed hostilities with Spain exposed the Spanish galleons, and colonies, and coasts to the private or public warfare of the English marine, and threw open to English assault or occupation the colonial regions of the world, united under one sceptre by Philip's acquisition of Portugal, the moral and material instruments were already prepared to take advantage of this conjuncture. In availing themselves of the tempting opportunities of that great crisis, the English rovers, the Drakes, and Hawkinses, and Frobishers, and Raleighs, and Grenvilles, and Lanes, easily beguiled themselves in regard to the complicated motives by which their enterprises were impelled. Selfish aims were the instruments by which the beneficent designs of Providence were accomplished. The desire of private emolument was combined with and dignified by higher and more generous purposes. Every success obtained at the expense of the grasping despotism of Spain was an effectual blow struck for the security of the English throne—for the assertion and propagation of the Protestant religion—for the defence and enfranchisement of the nations—and for the privilege of untrammelled thought and action, and of expanding intelligence. Happy is the age when personal interests are thus identified with the processes of national grandeur, and with the advancing destinies of humanity! Fortunate, indeed, were the days of "Good Queen Bess," when this union took place for the exaltation of "Merrie England," and the diffusion of the Anglo-Saxon race! With instinctive and prophetic felicity did the maiden queen bestow her own highly-prized appellation of Virginia on the favored land where the English first obtained seizin of America! At that moment of time, on that distant spot, and by that act of occupation, marked forever by the restoration of Jamestown, all the lines of English

progress, all the currents of English freedom, all the promises of English greatness, all the tendencies of augmenting civilization, were represented, concorporated, and assured.

In estimating the social agitation during the reigns of Elizabeth and her successor, which has been indicated as one of the main incentives to colonial adventure, and as one of the chief agencies in commercial expansion, reference must be made to the financial condition of those times. Influences, apparently humble in their nature, and obscure in their action, but which are universal in their play, are more permanently and more potently operative than impulses of more splendid aspect. It was during these years, the close of the 16th and the commencement of the 17th century, that the prices of all productions, and of the agents of production, were rapidly rising in consequence of the augmentation of the precious metals by the copious supplies from the American mines. Nearly a century elapsed after the discovery of the Western World, before the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru occasioned any general derangement in values, or in the relations of society. Towards the conclusion of that period the financial disturbance generated large and rapid fortunes—embarrassed monarchs and governments, altering their relations to their subjects—disorganized the public exchequer—aggravated the necessities of the poor—heightened the cupidity of the rich—diminished the comparative ease of the ancient gentry—increased the luxury and ostentation of wealth—and inflamed the speculations of daring adventurers. To this cause must in part be attributed the contemporaneous celebrity of the Rosicrucians, the continued encouragement given to the pursuits of alchemy, in which Sir Humphrey Gilbert suffered himself to be involved—the impatient avidity with which gold was demanded from all newly-discovered lands—the perseverance with which strange routes to the East Indies were explored—by Archangel—by the North

West passage—through Muscovy, Persia, Egypt—along the shores of North America—and in the interior of North Carolina and Virginia. To the same impulse we must also partially ascribe the restless activity with which the English endeavored to multiply alliances with strange nations, and the establishment of great mercantile associations—the Russia—the Turkey—the East India—the Virginia—the London—and the Plymouth Companies.

The religious dissensions in England have not been enumerated among the direct influences determining English colonization in America. The general movement communicated by the Reformation, and the spirit impressed by it on the whole series of colonial transactions, are sufficiently evident, and have been frequently alluded to. These discords tended to multiply the colonies after one had been established; they increased emigration from abroad, and augmented the colonial population; they determined the location of different bodies of exiles; and they exasperated into a passionate enthusiasm the attachment of the colonists to civil and religious liberty; but they did not, in any considerable degree, encourage the original fervor of colonization. The chief influence of a religious character, which excited the early English efforts, was derived from no sectarian quarrels at home, but from the pervading spirit of the Reformation, as embodied in the national resistance to the spiritual and political domination of Spain. The main significance of the occupation of the North American shores by the English must, therefore, be sought from the early Virginia colony, and not from the sectional or sectarian import of the later Puritan settlements in New England, the Catholic province of Maryland, the Huguenot emigrants in South Carolina, or the Quaker establishments in Pennsylvania. Each of these Plantations, and of the States which have issued from them, possesses its

own merits and its own distinctive claims to respectful consideration. They have their own honor, as they had their several missions, which I would rather enhance than tarnish. Each has co-operated, in its own mode, and in its own good time, in preparing, effectuating and evolving the system of the American Confederation. But the inauguration of the mighty drama was due, not to them, nor to the influences which distinguished them from each other, but to the leader of the forlorn hope of English colonization in America—the first English settlement at Jamestown. The virtue of the plant is in the seed. The circulation proceeds from the root to all the umbrageous and fruit-bearing branches. The historical significance of the American Union must, consequently, be referred to the Virginia colony. This conclusion is corroborated by observing how the spirit and progress of the Old Dominion, the character of the Revolution, and the genius of the United States, have all been affected by the fact that Virginia was founded by the gallant gentlemen of England, and was replenished with her best blood, instead of proceeding from religious sectaries, and perpetuating in her veins the venom of theological discord and polemical rancor.

The large and solemn purport of the Virginia Colony, and its efficacy in promoting the liberty, intelligence and civilization of humanity, arose from that very procrastination of English maritime adventure, which, at first view, provokes both surprise and regret. Had England engaged in colonial conquests concurrently with Portugal, or Spain, or France, she would have transplanted to these Hesperian shores the crumbling institutions of an expiring social system, the ascendancy of the Roman Catholic creed, and the despotic rule of the Tudor line. In consequence of the delay, the first fruits of the approaching regeneration of England were naturalized here; while the superannuated trunk, from which the vigorous

offshoot had been taken, was left in its native soil to undergo the painful process of decay and regeneration. The vanguard of English intelligence and freedom erected the standard of liberty and hope on the bays of Roanoke and the banks of the Powhatan. Not merely were the learning, and science, and literature, and practical wisdom, and active energy of the brilliant age of Elizabeth domiciliated here by the opportune establishment of the Virginia Colony, but the glowing promise of the future, in that glorious dawn of English splendor, so soon to be involved in tumult and clouds at home, was conveyed with loftier auspices, and ampler ulterior capabilities of realization, to the infant offspring of England beyond the Atlantic flood. In that day, Pandora's box had been delivered into the hands of Albion. It had been opened with the impatience characteristic of nations, as of individuals. The liberated troop of evils and discords flew abroad over the land, and incited long and acrimonious dissension, and civil war. The undying hope of humanity that remained behind, floated over the waters with the adventurers of the Virginia Company, rested on the foundation-stone of resurgent Jamestown, and may still cheer the ominous apprehensions of the present generation.

The age of Elizabeth was gilded with the genial light of the elder time. The illumination of former days shed a softer glory over the reign of the Maiden Queen than had belonged to those feudal centuries whence the light had been transmitted, or had shone upon any former period since the dreamy infancy of ancient Greece. The lingering sunset of chivalry clothed the court and camp of Elizabeth with a gentler effluence than attended its meridian; and, as it sunk in the distant West, the long line of undulating glory, which stretched across the Atlantic from England to America, marked the pathway of empire reaching westward to its resting-place. It was an

exhilarating omen that the colonization of Virginia was undertaken and achieved, while

> Life's morning radiance had not left the hills,
> Her dew was on the flowers.

The influences of childhood, unnoted as they may be, accompany us through life, and unconsciously mould the character and shape the destiny. It must be, as it has been, a cherished recollection of Virginians, and an active incentive to patriotic achievement, that the colony whence they have sprung was founded by a race of heroes, who united to their martial prowess and practical prudence, the courtly graces of knighthood, the noble sentiments of chivalry, and the early bloom of literary and scientific culture. It is a proud reflection, that Virginia might appropriately assume as her crest the Red Crosse Knight of Spenser's Faerie Queene, to indicate the time, the mode, the circumstances, and the significance of her original establishment. For the same reason, she might herself be fitly blazoned under the symbol of Una and her lamb:

> The lovely ladie rode him faire beside.

These allusions to the most attractive portion of Spenser's enchanting poem suggest a brief notice of the special religious function of the English Colonies of America in the general history of the world. The First Book of the Faerie Queene, to which reference is made, represents the machinations of Duessa, or the Papacy against Fidessa, or the Reformed Church; and illustrates the final triumph of Una, or Holiness. In England, and throughout Europe, the ideal anticipations of Spenser were frustrated or impaired by long continued religious discords, and by foreign and domestic wars

propagated by religion, or waged in its name. The contemplated issue has scarcely been attained even yet. If the fortunes of religion, or the prospects of toleration, had been abandoned entirely to the perils of this long and embittered strife, they might still be endangered, or uncertain. The result was definitely and effectually attained, so far as it was attained, only by the favoring necessities and accidents which encompassed the English settlements in America. There alone did Protestantism become dominant without a rival or domestic adversary. Thence alone could proceed the complete and unembarrassed manifestation of Protestant tendencies in spiritual, political and social affairs. It was by their example, and countenance, and aid, and provocation, that the Catholic dominion of Spain and France on this Continent was first restricted—then diminished; and, at last, nearly obliterated. Moreover, the English establishments in America, with the commerce and wealth and naval superiority engendered by them, gave the Protestant party in Europe an equiponderance with the Catholic, and ultimately a decided political predominance. This balance of the two great forces of modern history was not merely the generating cause of the principal wars in Europe down to the French Revolution, but it was the mainspring of the movements of the modern world, and the chief impulse to the rapid development of the energies and resources of modern civilization. The principal stages of this progress are marked in the historical geography of America by the subjugation of Jamaica—the re-occupation of Nova Scotia, and seizure of the adjacent islands—the conquest of Canada—the reduction of the Northwest by Virginia; the purchase of Louisiana—the acquisition of Florida, and the independence of the Spanish Provinces in North and South America. These territorial changes were nearly all concurrent with, and consequent upon, the great wars in Europe.

But 'peace hath her victories as well as war.' These losses

of the Catholic powers represented larger acquisitions of wealth and influence, gained at their expense by the Anglo-Saxon race, in the aggrandisement of their commerce, manufactures, industry, activity, prosperity and intelligence.

This long struggle was atttended with universal benefit to humanity. Had Catholicism ruled with supreme dominion over the earth, coincidently with the universal empire of Spain, or France, or Austria, intelligence must have become stagnant or retrograde—enterprise must have been arrested—progress been paralyzed and freedom extinguished. From this fate the world was preserved by the sturdy maintenance of Protestantism—by the sudden augmentation of English prestige and power—by the various blows inflicted by England on Spain—and by Marlborough's victories over the armies of Louis XIV. Blenheim, and Ramilies, and Oudenarde, and Malplaquet secured the fortunes of Protestantism and liberal institutions when they were still trembling in the balance. The energies, and resources, and policy which triumphed on these splendid battle-fields had been largely due to the maritime ascendancy of England, created in the first instance, and expanded afterwards by its colonial possessions in America.

As the long series of dependent effects is involved in the ultimate cause; as both blossom and fruit are potentially, if not actually, contained in the nascent germ; no injustice is done to later co-agents, no exaggeration of the truth produced, by regarding the Virginia Colony as the seminal principle whence proceeded the renovated order of the ages, and the new progeny commissioned by Heaven.

> Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.
> Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;
> Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.

When I regard the aspects and the evolutions of the Past; the abundant achievement of the Present, embodied in this

great Confederacy;—when I contemplate the uncertain but still exhilarating promises of the Future, I cannot deem myself beguiled by the attractions of a most attractive subject into any undue estimation of the significance of the first successful attempt at English colonization in America. I have only clothed with words the revelations of accomplished history, while indulging, from the scene of Jamestown, these

> Sweet meditations, the still overflow
> Of present happiness, while future years
> Lacked not anticipations, tender dreams,
> No few of which have since been realized;
> And some remain, hopes for our future life.

The definite establishment of the Virginia Colony furnished the elevated point of view whence the eye swept round the wide horizon of modern history. The longer and the more diligently the progress of humanity is contemplated from this lone watch-tower of time, the grander and the more impressive appears the prospect, and the more crowded becomes the phantasmagoria with the portentous shapes of struggling creeds, embattled systems, warring monarchs, rising and declining empires, while, in the far distance, continues to arise from the dust, and din, and confusion of the spectral turmoil, like the immortal spirit ascending from the grave, the enlarging and glorified divinity of America.

The rapid and inadequate survey of the antecedent and contemporaneous events and tendencies which received their fulfillment, immediate or prospective, in the American Colonies of England, has necessarily left the modes of operation undetailed, and numerous phenomena altogether unnoticed. Yet all the living movements of Europe have been seen to contribute, voluntarily or involuntarily, the choice rewards of their effort as gems to sparkle in the coronet of the infant Virginia. The chart of modern civilization clearly reveals the confluence of all the main channels of progress in the Vir-

ginia Colony. If the point of convergence appear trivial or obscure, this can only be occasioned by the infirmity of the human mind, which disables it from appreciating consequences in their inception—from anticipating results before 'the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together'—or from interpreting

> those blind motions of the Spring
> That show the year is turned.

If the prophetic "vision and the faculty divine" be wisely denied to man, history furnishes the necromantic art which can evoke from the shades the actors and the actions of the past, and elicit from them oracles refused to the contemporaneous generations. There are certain vases which appear dull and opaque in the ordinary light of day, but over whose surface spread images, grotesque, or beautiful, or suggestive, when illuminated from within. Similar to these are the incidents, and forms, and fashions of past centuries. They preserve impressions which are only rendered legible by the inner light supplied by a later time. If

> ——— the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears,

is it not reasonable to suppose that historical transactions, of humble original pretensions, but growing within our knowledge by a secret life into mighty forms, may have possessed from the beginning a fullness of meaning and predestined vitality, unsuspected at the period of their occurrence, and not fathomable till the issues of time approximate to their perfection?

Did these views require further corroboration than the seal of reality, which is impressed upon them, that evidence would be abundantly supplied by the sequel to the inquiry which has been hazarded. Every great mutation in the subsequent

phases of Europe has been connected, by a reciprocating movement, with the fortunes of the American Colonies; and the reaction of America upon Europe has increased with the years till the machinery of the world is set in motion, and its population employed and supported mainly by the products of the Southern States. The investigation into the details of this extensive change is wider even than that which has been so imperfectly prosecuted. It demands other occasions and other expositors. But, to justify the statement advanced, it may be noted that the growth and population of Virginia and her sister colonies were favored by the convulsions of Germany and the whole continent during the Thirty Years' War—by the jealousies of Spain and France—and by the domestic transmutation of the latter country under the guidance of Richelieu—that the English Navigation Acts, which so powerfully affected the mercantile growth of England and the internal development of the American Colonies, and which invited and inaugurated the American Revolution, were passed during the ascendancy of Cromwell and under the Restoration of Charles II., in a spirit of hostility against the Dutch—that the Great Rebellion in England, the discords under Charles II. and James II.—the Revolution of 1688—the Dutch wars, and the vast schemes of Louis XIV.—the perils of the Hanoverian succession, and the repeated menaces of Jacobite insurrection—withdrew scrutiny from the English colonies, and favored the uninterrupted development of the native energy of self-government. During the great wars of the eighteenth century, American interests were continually involved, and became the predominant consideration in the Seven Years' War, so far as France and England were concerned. The treaties of Utrecht, Aix-la-Chapelle and Paris gave increasing prominence to American affairs. By the terms of the last peace, France was excluded from the Western continent. Out of the war preceding this peace, grew the claim of Eng-

land to American revenue, or, at least, to the right of taxing America. Both demands were repudiated by the Colonies. From this resistance sprang the American Revolution and American independence—kindled and sustained by the increase of population, energy, wealth, and territory, resulting from the long European wars of the century. The controversies, which kindled and accompanied the war of American Independence, were co-ordinate with the memorable struggle of the Rockingham party in England for the maintenance of the English franchises. Burke, and his allies, avowed that English freedom was staked on the event of the American Revolution. "We are convinced," says Burke, in the bold address to the king; "we are convinced, beyond a doubt, that a system of dependence, which leaves no security to the people for any part of their freedom in their own hands, cannot be established in any inferior member of the British Empire, without consequentially destroying the freedom of that very body, in favor of whose boundless pretensions such a scheme is adopted." * * * "What, gracious sovereign, is the empire of America to us, or the empire of the world, if we lose our own liberties? We deprecate this last of evils. We deprecate the effect of the doctrines, which must support and countenance the government over conquered Englishmen."

The remembrance of mortifying disasters, and of the recent loss of their vast American possessions, inflamed the jealousy of the French, and stimulated equally the secret encouragement and the open assistance extended by France to the American patriots in their revolt against English exaction. The companions of La Fayette, and Rochambeau, and D'Estaing, zealously conveyed to France the opinions and the policy which they had aided in rendering triumphant on this side of the Atlantic. Their new enthusiasm for liberty helped to precipitate the French Revolution. Thus, even from this

hasty sketch, it appears that the progress of America had a direct effect on the fortunes of Europe, and that every stage in the destinies of Europe was closely implicated with the growth, development, prosperity and influence of the English colonies.

To secure unity of view, all these great changes, antecedent or subsequent to the first efforts of English colonization, have been regarded from the central position afforded by the restoration of Jamestown. To this point converged all previous tendencies, and from it radiated those diverse potencies which encouraged or absorbed the more recent currents of human progress. The Virginia Colony thus reflects the summation or anticipation of modern advancement. It is the magic mirror which revives the Past, explains the Present, and reveals the hopes, if not the promises, of the Future.

But the end is not yet. The movement originally communicated to the heavenly bodies not only rolled them at the first along their mighty orbits, but attended and attends them throughout the millennial periods of their existence, determining their habitual relations to each other, and all the modifications of the material universe. Complicated and incalculable as may be the varied consequences of the original impulse, the dependence of the effects is evident and unmistakable. Similarly, any movement impressed upon the social masses of the world, which in their oscillating revolutions effectuate the historical progress of humanity, operates through all time in regulating and generating the subsequent evolutions of the race. No mechanical power is inactive in the cosmical system—no force is squandered in the moral universe. The magnitude of the influence to be expected from any novel phenomenon in the political progress of the world may be estimated from the amount of previous preparation, and will be evinced by the concentration of forces involved in

its production and accomplished development. From the universality of this law it may be confidently proclaimed that Virginia, and the later stars of the American constellation, announced a nobler and loftier destiny than was ever vouchsafed to any other community.

All the main lines of earlier progress constitute the heralds and the servitors of Virginia. Her nativity was the signal for the multiplication of similar settlements on the coasts secured to England by her establishment. The conjoined development and confederation of all of these—aided immensely by the special and direct action and generosity of Virginia herself—have created a vast republic, transcending in resources and capabilities the universal empires of an earlier time. Since the settlement of the First Colony, the influence of these commonwealths on the ancient monarchies of Europe has been immediate—powerful—and ever-expanding. In our own days, Virginia and her progeny have assumed, in their union and by their union, the position of one of the chief powers of the earth. This has been done in the infancy of the nation. But larger than all past accomplishment is the promise of prospective and rapid grandeur. While thus growing in strength, and resources, and population, and power; and, by the very process of increase, a home has been reared in the West for the free; an asylum offered for the oppressed of all nations, climes, tongues, and creeds; and the wealth, and invention, and intelligence, and culture of the whole world have been naturalized and multiplied here. "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

By the long series of great events which has generated the results around us—by the golden promise of the dawn—by the dazzling performance of the early day—are we not invited to indulge fair auguries of the meridian splendor? In the

midst of the doubts and alarms, which for the time encircle us with almost impenetrable mists, are we not still compelled to recognize "an increasing purpose;"

> And through thick veils to apprehend
> A labor working to an end.

The destiny of Rome seems to be renewed in the only other republic that ever approximated to the power, enterprise, and extent of the Roman dominion. It is apparently designed by Providence that the United States should attract, absorb, incorporate, and consubstantiate, as Rome did in antiquity, all the improvable races of mankind—all the tendencies of human progress—all the mature elements of modern civilization—and should sublimate the all-embracing concretion into the fairest fruit of time. All this, though the task of centuries, and the conjoint achievement of the federated States, of both European and American advancement, and of all terrestrial and celestial influences, will be regarded in long-distant years, when present passions have expired and present systems have vanished, as the abundant fruitage of the Virginia Colony.

But to realize these bright auguries, the scheme of destiny must not be thwarted by the jealousies and reckless improvidence of men. Nations have their fates in their own hands, as well as individuals, and they may make or mar their fortunes. The tables of the Divine law may be dashed into fragments, in consequence of the fury of a stiff-necked and rebellious people, and a golden calf, the abomination of Egypt, set up for worship in their stead, by the very children of the promise. The populations to whom the triumphant career is announced by the whole tenor of the past, may dissipate the vision in the clouds by the tempests of civil discord, evoked from the dark caverns of the human heart, where they are with difficulty kept in subjection. But, if lofty destinies are

rejected, and nations are torn asunder, and populations are extirpated, and societies are extinguished by foreign war, or domestic dissension, or moral decay, the purpose of Providence moves on to its sure accomplishment, waiting only for a more propitious time, and seeking or creating more docile and intelligent instruments.

It is a mighty and unfathomable destiny which has been entrusted to the American people; and with the solemnity, and caution, and patience, and unfailing resolution, which such a destiny demands, they should strive for its accomplishment—discarding alike the dictates of anger, the suggestions of prejudice, and the temptations of pecuniary interest. But whatever issue impends—whether our sun at its appointed meridian shall look down in splendor, through the unclouded blue on a happy and united continent, smiling in plenteousness, and crowned with virtue; or shall conceal his face in angry gloom from a divided, and shattered, and warring people—the past is secured beyond the reach of casualty. The Virginia Colony furnished the exemplar and initiation of the English colonial system—she led the procession of modern freedom—she laid the foundation stone of the great edifice into which were aggregated the numerous members of the American republic—she opened the oceans to the commerce of England, and to the mercantile enterprise of the world. She inaugurated, too, the struggle which preserved the liberties of England and conquered those of America; and she taught a lesson to the world, which future ages will yet realize, even if the glory of completing what she so well began, should be forfeited by her and her companions in trial and in fame.

In closing this tribute to the services conferred by Virginia upon humanity, in consequence of the indissoluble connection of American with European history, may I be permitted to link once more the distinctions of the daughter

with the honors of the mother-land, by returning again to the heights which overlook the submerged site of Jamestown, and by applying to the Virginia Colony, in its infancy and in its progress, in the present and prospective promise of the Old Dominion, the eulogy and prayer pronounced over his native country by the laureate of England:

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
  The thunders breaking at her feet;
Above her shook the starry lights—
  She heard the torrents meet.

Within her place she did rejoice,
  Self gathered in her prophet-mind;
But fragments of her mighty voice
  Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down through town and field
  To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men revealed
  The fullness of her face—

* * *

Her open eyes desire the truth.
  The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
  Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and shine,
  Make bright our days and light our dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
  The falsehood of extremes!

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